



FEMA

Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Division

Overview

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Interoperable Communications Conference
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FEMA

Disaster Emergency Communications Division

Agenda

- FEMA Disaster Operations Directorate Overview
- Introduction to DEC Division
- Key Activities and Programs
- DEC Division Prepares
 - Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWG)
 - Operational Emergency Communications Plans
- DEC Division Responds
 - Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS)
- Recent Accomplishments

FEMA Disaster Operations Directorate Mission Statement

Build, sustain, and improve our ability to prepare, protect, respond, recover, and mitigate, in order to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the Nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters by enhancing our preparedness to respond to large scale disasters.

- FEMA's Disaster Operations Directorate (DOD) has eight Mission Goals that align with the overall mission statement of the directorate. The DEC Division's activities address DOD's Mission Goal 3.



Goal #3: Disaster Communications

Build A Robust Disaster Communications Program

Intent

Build a robust disaster communications program that promotes interoperability at the Federal, State, and local levels and ensures redundant capabilities for our response efforts. Disaster communications will incorporate all our capabilities, including MERS and technical assistance staff.



FEMA DEC Division

- FEMA's Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Division provides and integrates Federal communications support to emergency responders at all levels of government.

Emergency Communications is the means and method of transmitting and receiving voice, data, and video messages, information, and images critical to the successful management of an incident where communications infrastructure has been abnormally impacted or lost.



DEC Division Mission

- Ensure operable and interoperable communications are available in a disaster.
- Provide voice, video, and data communications for responders and Federal partners.
- Support emergency management across the entire disaster management lifecycle—preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.



DEC Division Roles and Responsibilities

Emergency Communications must be integrated at all government levels to effectively serve as the backbone of emergency response.

- Lead integrator of Federal resources during an incident to support the emergency communications needs of State, local, and Tribal governments
- Deploy communications assets during incidents
- Establish and support the communications needs of Joint Field Offices (JFO) and national response teams (e.g., IMAT, US&R, NDMS)
- Develop State-specific operational emergency communications plans
- Support Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWG)
- Coordinate efforts with Federal government agencies and industry partners

Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWG)

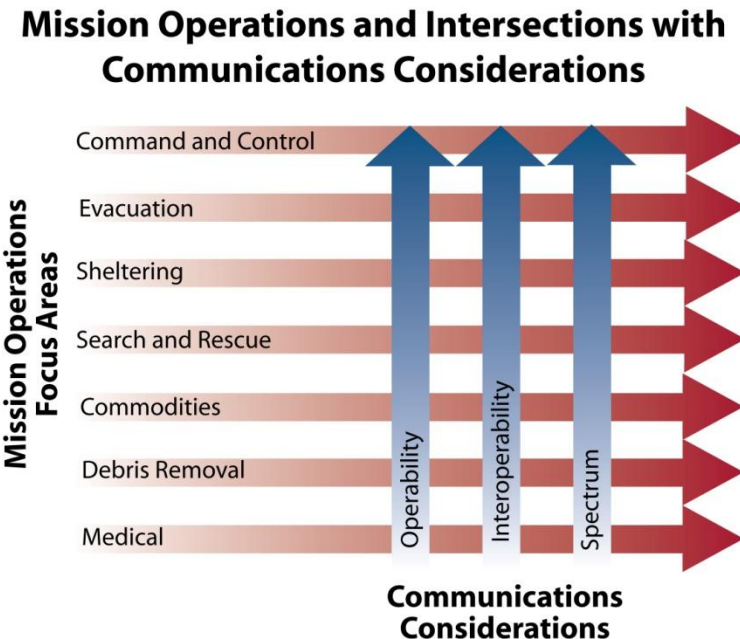
RECCWGs are planning and coordinating bodies that provide a forum to assess and address the survivability, sustainability, operability and interoperability of emergency communications at all government levels.

- RECCWGs serve as a single coordination point for emergency communications at the regional level.
- RECCWGs are regionally focused and are expected to have unique membership dependent on regional government structure and processes.
- Membership includes Federal, State, local, and Tribal representatives from emergency response organizations.
- FEMA has principal responsibility to ensure establishment of/support for RECCWGs.

Emergency Communications Plans

State Emergency Communications Plans

- Provide an integrated Federal, State, local, and Tribal approach to ensuring effective communications coordination prior to and immediately following an incident
- Identify key Federal, State and local emergency response agencies, and technical capabilities and resources prior to incident
- Provide a comprehensive view of communications requirements and subsequent mitigation strategies for seven mission areas—command and control, evacuation, search and rescue, sheltering, medical, commodities, and debris removal
- Establish relationships and a dialogue with key response organizations at the Federal, State, local, and Tribal levels



DEC Plans Benefits

PREPARE

- State and Local Benefits:
 - Enhanced state officials' awareness of Federal resources and capabilities
 - Improved preparedness activities (e.g., establish equipment caches)
 - Focused long-term investments on interoperable communications solutions
 - Communications gaps and mitigation strategies aligned with State's Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP)
 - Requirements analysis serves as input to RECCWG efforts



- ***Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS)*** serves as a key Federal tactical communications support element for emergency responders during an incident.
- Emergency responders may request MERS support during a declared incident through their respective State EOCs.



MERS can meet the challenge of diverse communications requirements in resource-constrained environments even when local communications infrastructure is heavily damaged or completely destroyed.

Services include:

- Interoperability packages
- Communications technicians
- Emergency generators
- Facility communications support
- Backhaul connectivity
- Backup EOC capability
- Temporary communications infrastructure
- Sheltering communications



DEC Division Tactical Response

Accomplishments

- Provided emergency communications support to Galveston during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike.
- Repaired the main repeater in the Houston Reliance Center to support Texas Highway Patrol communications.
- Provided communications support to Louisiana State Police and Terrebonne Parish.
- Provided communications in support of coastal flooding in Oregon and Seattle, Washington for USCG and county EOCs.
- Provided network security for the 2008 DNC and supported communications links for the 2008 RNC and the 2009 Presidential Inauguration.
- Established mobile command posts in four locations during the recent Kentucky winter storms, allowing National Guard units to assist with command and control by providing voice, video, and data capabilities.



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RECCWG

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Questions?

